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Tolstoy and Dostoevsky: Links between *Brothers Karamazov* and *Anna Karenina*

In thinking about Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, I wondered what accounts for the phenomenon, in many fields, of the appearance of two giants, geniuses, of equal stature, at the same time. I then thought about an Andrei Bitov essay, subtitled “A Talk not Given at the Opening Session of an International Conference in Honor of the 500th Anniversary of the Dostoevsky Family.”¹ Bitov speculates that people say Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, rather than Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, because of the rhythm. And even in the program for our Naples *Dostoevsky* conference, our session is listed as “Tolstoy and Dostoevsky.” In his essay, Bitov speaks about Dostoevsky’s being older, during his lifetime, than was Tolstoy. He also speaks about the human need for thinking about things in pairs: “Who is better, Tolstoy or Dostoevsky?” (“Kto lushche – Tolstoi ili Dostoevskii?”). (Bitov, p.28)

In thinking about how to approach the topic of our round table, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, I decided to focus on two novels, one by Dostoevsky and one, by Tolstoy. I decided to reread each of the two novels, as if I were reading these books for the first time. I decided to reread them with only our topic, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, in mind. I thought that it might be fruitful to concentrate on two novels written at about the same time, *Anna Karenina* and *Brothers Karamazov*, each of

¹ Andrei Bitov, “Apologija mos’ki, ili o kriteriakh i masshtabakh (Rech’, ne proiznesennaja na otkrytii Mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii, posviashchennoi 500-letiiu roda Dostoevskikh),” in Andrei Bitov, *Piatoe izmerenie, na granitse vremeni i prostranstva* (Vladivostok, Al’manakh “Rubezh”: 2007, 2nd expanded edition), pp.26-31. Hereafter I shall place page references to this edition in parentheses (Bitov, page number) immediately following the quotation.

which, like *War and Peace* and *Crime and Punishment*, came out in *Russkii vestnik*. (*Anna Karenina* was written in 1873-77; published in 1875-77, with the exception of Part VIII, which came out separately; and then in 1878, in book form. *Brothers Karamazov* was begun in 1878 and published in the journal in 1879-80.)

What, then, did my reading of the two novels, with a focus only on the round table topic, reveal? First of all were the parallels that wouldn't necessarily have struck me with such intensity, had I been reading, as I usually do, Dostoevsky within the context of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy within the context of Tolstoy. Each of the two writers is concerned with connections. Tolstoy speaks about the structural principle of "tseplenie," and Dostoevsky's novel is all about connections. "Everything is connected to everything," we read over and over again.

Secondly, since I once wrote a book on the "superfluous man" ("lishnii chelovek") in Russian literature,² it will come as no surprise that I thought about the two novels in connection with that concept. One idea in the book was that the superfluous man, a nonconformist to a societal and/or metaphysical order, was often killed off, literally or figuratively, and that often, a conformist to a societal and/or metaphysical order was placed on a pedestal. Ivan Karamazov rebels against God's order, and Alesha conforms. A superfluous woman, Anna Karenina (she is even called "lishniaia" in the nursery), transgresses against God's laws and is condemned. Levin, although a *societal* misfit, conforms to God's laws and is praised.

When I think now, about Tolstoy's and Dostoevsky's approach to the person who doesn't adhere to society's conventions, I also think about the praise that both Tolstoy and Dostoevsky lavish upon some of their offbeat protagonists. Dostoevsky writes, about Alesha, in the "Ot avtora" section, "...not only is an eccentric 'not always' a particularity and a separate element, but, on the contrary, it happens sometimes that such a person ... carries within himself the very heart of the whole, and the rest of the men of his epoch have for some reason been temporarily torn from it, as if by a gust of wind..."³ ("Ibo ne tol'ko chudak 'ne vseгда' chastnost' i obosoblenie, a naprotiv, byvaet tak, chto on-to, pozhalyi, i nosit v sebe inoi raz

² Ellen Chances, *Conformity's Children. An Approach to the Superfluous Man in Russian Literature* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1978).

³ Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Constance Garnett, revised by Ralph E. Matlaw (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1976), p.xvii. Hereafter I shall place page references to this edition in parentheses (*Brothers*, page number) immediately following the quotation.

serdtsevinu tselogo, a ostal'nye liudi ego epokhi – vse, kakim-nibud' naplyvnyym vetrom, na vremia pochemu-to ot nego otorvalis'...)"⁴

Levin sees society from off center, from the side. He is awkward in high society and the city. He prefers the country. He prefers the company of the peasants, of Laska the dog, and Pava the cow, to the empty chatter of the city's social scene. Even though he sees society from the side, he is the center, in terms of moral values. Tolstoy, as we know, uses the technique of "ostranenie" to show reality in a fresh, new way, rather than in timeworn, conventional stereotypes. Levin himself can be viewed as an example of "ostranenie." He is a character who sees life in a fresh, new way when he finds meaning in the peasants' insights, when he discovers that the meaning of life is life itself, when he gets away from the timeworn constructs of philosophy and rational thought.

What are some of the other similarities between the two novels? Both are family novels (fathers and children; marriage) with forces of discord and forces of harmony. In the case of Father Zosima, Alesha, Kolya, and the boys, there is, by the end of the novel, active love in the "family of humankind" that does not depend on genetic bonds. In the case of Levin and Kitty, love and God exist within the bounds of one marriage. At the end of the novel, we see Kitty's and Levin's love for their son and for each other, and we read about Levin's living for God.

The two books begin in similar ways. The focus is on two fathers and husbands, Stiva and Fedor, who chase petticoats, are adulterers. Stiva is described in a positive light. The servants are on his side even though he is the guilty party. Dostoevsky's physical description of Fedor is negative. Stiva and Fedor both forget about their children. Gary Saul Morson equates Stiva with Ivan's devil. Both seem harmless. What seems ordinary can be true evil, he writes.⁵

Both Stiva and Fedor are the motivating forces of the downward spirals in the novels. Within the first few pages of each novel, the disharmony in each family is shown and named. In *Anna Karenina*, there is the famous first line, and then, the narrator immediately says, "Everything was upset in the Oblonskys' house"⁶ ("Vse smeshalos' v

⁴ F.M. Dostoevskii, *Brat'ia Karamazovy*, in F.M. Dostoevskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsati tomakh* (Leningrad, 1976), vol.14, p.5. Hereafter, I shall place page references to this edition in brackets [*Brat'ia*, volume, page number] immediately following the quotation.

⁵ Gary Saul Morson, *Anna Karenina in Our Time* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp.48-9.

⁶ Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, trans. L. and A. Maude, revised by George Gibian (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), p.1. Hereafter I shall place page

dome Oblonskikh").⁷ A few pages later, we read, "'Everything is disorganized,' thought Oblonsky;" (Tolstoy, vol.8, p.7) ("‘Vse smeshalos’,’ podumal Stiva." [Tolstoi, vol. 8, p.15]); and Matrena Filimonovna's words, "Everything in the house is topsy-turvy" (Tolstoy, vol.8, p. 5) ("‘...vse v dome navyntaraty poshlo” [Tolstoi, vol.8, p.12]). This is typical of Tolstoy. Life is seen from different people's perspectives. In *Brothers Karamazov*, within the first few pages, we read about the "disorderly life" (*Brothers*, p.3) ("besporiadochnaia zhizn'" [*Brat'ia*, vol.14, p.8]) of Fedor's and Adelaida Ivanovna's marriage; and about the Karamazov "inharmonious family" (*Brothers*, p.25) ("nestroino[m] semeistv[e]" [*Brat'ia*, vol.14, p.30]), and the "family discord" (*Brothers*, p.26) ("semeinye nesoglasiiia" [*Brat'ia*, vol.14, p.31]) between Fedor and Dmitry.

Anna comes from out of town in order to reconcile her brother Stiva and his wife Dolly. Because of Stiva's affair, she makes the trip which results in her meeting Vronsky and ultimately, in her suicide, in her falling away from God's law. Ivan comes from out of town (not to reconcile), but we read that he is acting as mediator between Fedor and his brother, Dmitry, while living at his father's house. Because of Fedor's actions – his rejection of Dmitry's requests for money and the rivalry for Grushenka's rivalry –, and because of Ivan's "all is permitted" philosophy, there is a murder and a suicide, each representing a lack of connection with God's laws.

In each novel, judging or not judging is of vital importance. There is the Biblical epigraph, "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay" ("Mne otmshchenie, i az vozdam"), Tolstoy's admonition that it is not up to society, but only up to God to judge. Tolstoy condemns Betsy Tverskaia for judging Anna, and he condemns Lydiia Ivanovna, with her hypocritical so-called religious faith, for judging Anna. Dostoevsky has a real trial that demonstrates the falsity of society. With the exception of Herzenstube, Alesha, Grushenka, and Ivan, almost no one is at the trial because of true concern for Dmitry. We are told that the ladies are on Dmitry's side because of his conquests of ladies' hearts, and that the men are against him because he had offended many of them during his stay in

references to this edition in parentheses (Tolstoy, page number) immediately following the quotation.

⁷ L.N. Tolstoi, *Anna Karenina*, in *Sobranie sochinenii v dvadtsati dvukh tomakh* (Moscow, 1981), vol.8, p.7. Hereafter I shall place page references to this edition in brackets [Tolstoi, volume, page number] immediately following the quotation.

the town. The president of the court is interested in the case only from the perspective of the influence of the societal environment on people. The prosecutor is focused on his own career.

In other sections of the novel, Dostoevsky spends a great deal of time talking about the importance of not judging, of accepting the mysterious ways of God. Jesus does not judge the Grand Inquisitor. The Grand Inquisitor does judge Jesus. Ivan judges God – how could he construct a world that contains the suffering of innocent children? Zosima says that we never know what comes out of what. One must not judge other human beings. One must forgive, as Markel said, all people and animals.

The jurors in *Brothers Karamazov* come to a false conclusion by relying on rational proof. Alesha and Grushenka intuitively know that Dmitry is innocent. Ivan tells the truth, but the evidence that he presents cannot be rationally substantiated. Levin cannot come to the truth about the meaning of life until he understands it intuitively and not rationally.

Tolstoy puts Anna on trial. He has “God” judge and punish her. The very first words of the novel are “*Vengeance is mine* [italics mine – E.C.], and I will repay.” Dostoevsky, in his novel, is gentler. No one should judge anyone. Everyone should be responsible to everyone. Dostoevsky’s God, in *Brothers Karamazov*, is not vengeful. It is Father Zosima’s teachings of love, forgiveness and acceptance of *all* of God’s ways, of all good and evil, that carry the day. Tolstoy allows that ending, but only for Levin and Kitty, not for Anna and Vronsky.

Dostoevsky was not so forgiving in some of his comments about Tolstoy’s Levin, in one of the essays that he wrote about the novel, *Anna Karenina*, in *Dnevnik pisatelja* in July and August, 1877. He wrote his strident words against Levin’s stand against the war to defend the Christian Serbs against the Moslem Turks, in the Russo-Turkish war. Dostoevsky is outraged at Levin’s reaction, in Part VIII of *Anna Karenina*, to the Russo-Turkish war. (Russia had declared war on Turkey in April, 1877.) Dostoevsky had been publishing some of his most xenophobic articles on the war in *Dnevnik pisatelja*. Levin, in a conversation with his half-brother Koznyshev, is against the war. The Russian “narod” doesn’t want it, says Levin. He says that he wouldn’t kill. Dostoevsky is beside himself. Dostoevsky mentions some of the atrocities of the Turks and of others against women and children, and he asks how Levin can advocate inaction. Dostoevsky writes, “...why doesn’t Levin’s heart bleed when he hears about mass killings, about children with crushed heads crawling after their raped mothers...” (“...kak zhe ne iskrovenit’ emu [Levinu – E.C.] serdtse svoe, slushaia ...

ob izbieniakh massami, ob detiakh s prolomlennymi golovami, polzaiushchikh okolo iznasilovannykh svoikh materei,...”). He continues, “Levin stands thinking, ‘Kitty is in fine spirits and had a good appetite today; we’ve given the boy a bath and he’s begun to recognize me; what do I care what goes on over there in another hemisphere?’”⁸ (“‘Kiti vesela i s appetitom segodnia kushala, mal’chika vymyli v vane, i on stal menia uznavat’ i: kakoe mne delo, chto tam v drugom polusharii proiskhodit;...’”)⁹

It seems to me that in one way, one can see, in that essay and in Dostoevsky’s thoughts about Levin, one of the many seeds of the future conversation in which Ivan asks Alesha whether he could forgive atrocities against children. Levin’s imagined response to the suffering of innocent children is part of the structure of Ivan’s questions. Ivan, like Dostoevsky in the essay, cannot accept what Dostoevsky’s imagined Levin can. In this, *Anna Karenina* is one of the many triggers of that powerful creation, the chapter entitled “Rebellion” (“Bunt”) in *Brothers Karamazov*. Dostoevsky, in *Brothers Karamazov*, which he started working on only a few months after writing his essays on *Anna Karenina*, returns to the questions he implicitly brings up about Levin – who is responsible for whom? Am I my brother’s keeper?

In this Dostoevsky article on *Anna Karenina*, he casts Levin in the role that he will later cast Ivan in when Ivan refuses to take responsibility for others. Ivan leaves town. He doesn’t want to get involved. He, in everyday life, is not his brother’s keeper, nor is he his father’s keeper. Yet in “Bunt,” Ivan, in the abstract, defends the suffering children. In Dostoevsky’s *Anna Karenina* article, there is only one possible response – to help one’s Slavic Christian brothers against the Moslem Turks. In the novel, Ivan lists not only the Turks’ atrocities against women and children, but also Circassians’, Western Europeans’, and Russians’. In the

⁸ Fyodor Dostoevsky, “Levin’s Agitation. A Question. Does Distance Have an Influence on Love for Humanity? Can One Agree with the Opinion of One Turkish Prisoner on the Humaneness of Some of Our Ladies? So What, Then, Are Our Teachers Teaching Us?,” in Fyodor Dostoevsky, *A Writer’s Diary. Volume 2 1877-1881*, trans. Kenneth Lantz (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1990), p.1099. Hereafter I shall place page references to this edition and volume in parentheses (*Diary*, page number) immediately following the quotation.

⁹ F.M. Dostoevskii, “Sotriasienie Levina. Vopros: imeet li rasstoianie vliianie na chelovekoliubie? Mozhno li soglasit’sia s mneniem odnogo plennogo turka o gumannosti nekotorykh nashikh dam? Chemu zhe, nakonets, nas uchat nashi uchiteli?,” in F.M. Dostoevskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsati tomakh* (Leningrad, 1983), vol.25, p.223. Hereafter, I shall place page references to this edition and volume in brackets [*Dnevnik*, page number] immediately following the quotation.

novel, Ivan cries out, "I must have retribution..." (*Brothers*, p.225) ("...mne nado vozmezdie." [*Brat'ia*, vol.14, p.222]). He is tortured by the sufferings of innocents as he cries out, "...what do *I* care for *avenging* them,... since [they – E.C.] have already been tortured? ... I want to forgive. I want to embrace..." [my italics – E.C.] (*Brothers*, p.226) ("...zachem *mne* ikh *otmshchenie*, ...kogda te uzhe zamucheny?... ia prostit' khochu i obniat' khochu..." [my italics – E.C.] [*Brat'ia*, vol.14, p.223]), but he doesn't want to forgive the torturers.

Igor' Volgin wrote about the connection of the passage in *Brothers Karamazov* to Dostoevsky's writings on the "eastern question" in *Dnevnik pisatel'ia*.¹⁰ There is also a link, it seems to me, with Levin's wish to be uninvolved in the war, uninvolved in vengeance. In the case of both Levin and Ivan, egoism is Dostoevsky's explanation for what he sees as indifference to the sufferings of others. Thus, it is not necessary to get involved. For Ivan, thinking only about oneself leads to his leaving town. For Dostoevsky, neither Levin nor Ivan is his brother's keeper. Ivan, in "Bunt," is haunted by the question of earthly vengeance. I don't want to turn the other cheek. I want vengeance now. On one level, *Brothers Karamazov* deals, in distilled essence, with those words of the Bible, "mne otmshchenie, i az vozdam," – is it for me to judge, or for God? – those very words that serve as the epigraph to Tolstoy's novel. Both writers deal with the same question: is it for the human being to judge, or for God? Dostoevsky, in dealing with the question of one's responsibility to others, weaves into his novel one of the themes that he had addressed in his comments on Levin.

With Dostoevsky, of course, no one theme has only one single source. We know that there are multiple sources that contribute to one theme. Think, for example, of the multiplicity of ways in which Dostoevsky addresses the theme of fathers and children – his son's dying, the guilt of the father for the son, the guilt of the son for the father, the question of the "narod" and its responsibility to the father (tsar) in connection with Karakozov's attempt to murder the tsar, etc., etc.

Robert Belknap, in *The Genesis of The Brothers Karamazov*, writes, "Dostoevsky's reading was like his writing." He "would read with a collection of themes in his mind that he did not know exactly how to use but that he knew were related in ways too intricate for the systematic part of his mind to handle." "Tolstoy would read with a treatise in mind that

¹⁰ Igor' Volgin, "Nravstvennye osnovy publitsistiki Dostoevskogo (Vostochnyi vopros v Dnevnikhe pisatel'ia)," in *Izvestiia AN SSSR, seriia literatury i iazyka*, vol.30, vypusk 4, 1971, pp.312-324.

he intended to write or at least work out with a clear sense of what had been said on the subject.”¹¹

In the same way, we see that Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* focuses on the “vengeance is mine” theme in terms of one question, living according to God’s laws or not in terms of marriage and individual life. For Dostoevsky, the “vengeance is mine” theme is linked to many questions – judgment, forgiveness, Roman Catholicism, French Utopian socialism, the moral implications of control over the life of another. When does responsibility for another become totalitarian? When does lack of responsibility become moral neglect? For Tolstoy, in *Anna Karenina*, the question is focused solely on the importance of God’s role, as opposed to the human being’s, to seek vengeance. This is true for Dostoevsky as well, but God himself is not judgmental. For Dostoevsky, everything touches everything, and it is not up to us to understand God’s ways. It is up to us to love and forgive, as Zosima teaches.

Dostoevsky abstracts the questions about responding to the Turks’ atrocities that he poses to Levin in his *Anna Karenina* essay, to humanity as a whole in *Brothers Karamazov*. What is anyone’s responsibility to any other human being? As we know, in the novel, Dostoevsky presents questions and gives opposing sides equal time.

Other parts of Dostoevsky’s essays on *Anna Karenina* also reflect concerns that are pertinent to *Brothers Karamazov*. In fact, although Dostoevsky is talking about Tolstoy’s novel, many of the issues he discusses are central to Dostoevsky’s own works, including *Brothers Karamazov*. In one of the *Anna Karenina* essays he wrote before his strident words about Levin in Part VIII, Dostoevsky says that the novel expresses a view of “human guilt and criminality”¹² (“vinovnost’ i prestupnost”).¹³ “Caught up in a whirl of falsities, people transgress and are doomed to destruction” (Dostoevsky, “Anna,” in *Diary*, pp.1069-70) (“Zakhvachennye v krugovorot lzhi, liudi sovershaiut prestuplenie i

¹¹ Robert L. Belknap, *The Genesis of The Brothers Karamazov. The Aesthetics, Ideology, and Psychology of Making a Text* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1990), p.19.

¹² “*Anna Karenina* as a Fact of Special Importance,” in Fyodor Dostoevsky, *A Writer’s Diary. Volume 2 1877-1881*, trans. Kenneth Lantz (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1990), p.1069. Hereafter I shall place page references to this edition and volume in parentheses (Dostoevsky, “Anna,” in *Diary*, page number) immediately following the quotation.

¹³ “*Anna Karenina* kak fakt osobogo znacheniiia,” in F.M. Dostoevskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol.25, p.200. Hereafter I shall place page references to this edition and volume in brackets [Dostoevskii, “Anna,” in *Dnevnik*, page number] immediately following the quotation.

gibnut...” [Dostoevskii, “*Anna*,” in *Dnevnik*, p.200]). This is about Anna, but it can also be applied to Smerdiakov.

Dostoevsky praises Tolstoy for his genius in probing the psychology of the human soul, for showing that “evil lies deeper in human beings than socialists ... suppose; ...” (Dostoevsky, “*Anna*,” in *Diary*, p.1071) (“...zlo taitsia v chelovechestve glubzhe, chem predpolagaiut ... sotsialisty...” [Dostoevskii, “*Anna*,” in *Dnevnik*, p.201]). “No social structure,” he writes, “will eliminate evil” (Dostoevsky, “*Anna*,” in *Diary*, p.1071) (“...ni v kakom ustroistve obshchestva ne izbegnete zla, ...” [Dostoevskii, “*Anna*,” in *Dnevnik*, p.201]). Tolstoy is a genius for showing that “... abnormality and sin arise from that human soul itself...” (Dostoevsky, “*Anna*,” in *Diary*, p.1071) (“... nenormal’nost’ i grekh iskhodiat iz nee [[“dushi chelovecheskoi” – E.C.]] samoi” [Dostoevskii, “*Anna*,” in *Dnevnik*, p.201]). This applies to Anna, but it is also relevant to *Brothers Karamazov*. He writes, “the laws of the human soul are ... so little known, so obscure ... and so mysterious, that there ... cannot be ... *final* judges; but there is He who says, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay.’ He alone knows *all* the mystery of this world and the final destiny of man. ... The human judge ought to know that he is not the final judge...,” and that he should “turn to the only solution – to Mercy and Love.” (Dostoevsky, “*Anna*,” in *Diary*, p.1071) (“...zakony dukha chelovecheskogo stol’ ... neizvestny, ... stol’ neopredeleny i stol’ tainstvenny, chto ... ne mozhet byt’ ... sudej *okonchatel’nykh*, a est’ Tot, kotoryi govorit: ‘Mne otmshchenie i az vozdam’. Emu odnomu lish’ izvestna *vsia* tajna mira sego i *okonchatel’naia* sud’ba cheloveka. ... Sam sud’ia chelovecheskii dolzhen znat’ ..., chto on ne sud’ia *okonchatel’nyi*, ... i pribegnet k edinstvennomu vykhodu – k Miloserdiu i Liubvi” [Dostoevskii, “*Anna*,” in *Dnevnik*, pp.201-2]). This, of course, is at the core of *Brothers Karamazov*.

At one point, Dostoevsky focuses on the scene of Anna’s illness and writes that Tolstoy “brilliantly show[s]” that “...transgressors and enemies are suddenly transformed into higher beings, into *brothers* [italics mine – E.C.] who have forgiven one another everything, into beings who, through mutual forgiveness, have cast off lies, guilt, and crime, ...” (Dostoevsky, “*Anna*,” in *Diary*, p.1071) (“... prestupniki i vrugi vdrug preobrazhaiutsia v sushchestva vysshie, v *brat’ev* [italics mine – E.C.], vse protivshikh drug druga, v sushchestva, kotorye sami, vzaimnym vseproshcheniem sniali s sebia lozh’, vinu i prestupnost’ ...” (Dostoevskii, “*Anna*,” in *Dnevnik*, p.202]).

This, too, is one of the central themes of *Brothers Karamazov*. Everyone is responsible for everyone. Everyone should act as brothers in love and forgiveness. And Dostoevsky also speaks about those who, like Anna, cannot find their way from “darkness” (Dostoevsky, “Anna,” in *Diary*, p.1072) (“mrak” [Dostoevskii, “Anna,” in *Dnevnik*, p.202]) to “light” (Dostoevsky, “Anna,” in *Diary*, p. 1072) (“svet” [Dostoevskii, “Anna,” in *Dnevnik*, p.202]). Here, there is a parallel to Smerdiakov. Dostoevsky speaks about those who have “a passion for vengeance” (Dostoevsky, “Anna,” in *Diary*, p.1072) (“strast’ otmshcheniia” [Dostoevskii, “Anna,” in *Dnevnik*, p.202]). Again, one can think of Anna, who thinks of revenging Vronsky, and of Smerdiakov, or of Katerina Ivanovna, in the courtroom, when she wants vengeance on Dmitry. Dostoevsky writes, about Tolstoy’s novel, very much in the spirit of Father Zosima, that there is “a profound lesson for the human judge, ... ‘No, vengeance is not always mine, and it is not always for me to repay’” (Dostoevsky, “Anna,” in *Diary*, p. 1072) (“... stol’ko nazidaniia dlia sud’i chelovecheskogo: ... ‘Net, ne vseгда mne otmshchenie i ne vseгда az vozdam,’ ...” [Dostoevskii, “Anna,” in *Dnevnik*, p.202]). We can think, here, about Ivan’s words about his desire for revenge for the torture of children.

In one way, then, I think that these essays can be seen as Dostoevsky’s response to Tolstoy, but they can also be seen, it seems to me, as hints that one of the many, many things that Dostoevsky is doing in *Brothers Karamazov* is “translating” *Anna Karenina* into his own unique “language,” into his own unique world outlook and unique way of writing.

In terms of the many ways in which these two novels, *Anna Karenina* and *Brothers Karamazov*, are on parallel tracks, let me conclude with two passages, one from the final pages of *Anna Karenina*, and one, from Father Zosima’s teachings. Both convey the passion for an authentic life filled with meaning that characterizes one of the messages of both of these books. Levin “...gaz[ed] at the downtrodden grass before him, and following the movements of a green insect...,” thought, “‘I have ...perceived what it is that I know... I know the meaning of ... life; ... to live for God, for the soul.’” (Tolstoy, *Anna*, p.721) (Levin “...gliad[el] na nesmiatuiu travu, kotoraiia byla pered nim, i sledia za dvizheniiami zelenoi bukashki,...” i dumal, “‘...Ia ... uznal to, chto ia znaiu... ...[S]mysl zhizni ...zhit’ dlia boga, dlia dushi’” [Tolstoi, *Anna*, vol.9, pp.394-5]).

Here is the passage from Father Zosima's teachings: "Every blade of grass, every insect, ant, and golden bee, all so amazingly know their path, though they have not intelligence, they bear witness to the mystery of God and continually accomplish it themselves" (*Brothers*, p.273). ("Vsiakaia-to travka, vsiakaia-to bukashka, muravei, phelka zolotaia, vse-to do izumleniia znaiut put' svoi, ne imeia uma, tainu bozhiiu svidetel'stvuiut, bespreryvno sovershaiut ee sami..." [*Brat'ia*, vol.14, p. 267])

As we know, only too well, – we, who love the works of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, – the search for a life of deep spiritual meaning lies at the core of both *Anna Karenina* and *Brothers Karamazov*.